

teurization of all market milk, in addition to the commendatory efforts which are being made to eradicate tuberculosis from dairy herds.

Koch's stand in the matter was the one great blunder of a remarkable scientific career. One should not forget what Abram Jacobi said on the occasion: "It is of more importance to save the lives of babies than to protect the reputation of one great scientist."

REFERENCE

1. Griffith, A. S. *J. Path. & Bact.*, XXXIII, 4: 1145 (Oct.), 1930.

THE LÜBECK DISASTER

WHILE it is probable that the true explanation of the Lübeck disaster will never be entirely known, the report from the German Federal Bureau of Health is of interest. The work was done by Professor Lange, and concurred in by Professor Neufeld, and Dr. Kirchner, of Hamburg. In the material which was available for study, were some remnants of the vaccine material which had been used, and a culture isolated from one of the infants who died of tuberculosis. From one of the vaccines, a virulent culture was obtained, while the growth from the other corresponded to BCG vaccine. The culture isolated from the dead child was apparently identical with strain H 29 of the Robert Koch Institute. The indications that the latter was used for inoculation is borne out by the fact that during part of the vaccination period there were many deaths, and at other times, very few, and not many severe illnesses. The explanation of reversion of type given by Petroff, of Saranac Lake, and Watson, of Canada, is regarded with skepticism.

The conclusion is that the accident in Lübeck was not due to the Calmette procedure as such, nor to BCG. It is regarded as "entirely probable" that there was a mixing of the virulent culture with the vaccine, through some error in handling.

The Federal Health Council holds the opinion that the whole question is so unsettled that general immunization of human beings, particularly when living bacilli are used, is for the present, ill-advised. In view of the Lübeck affair, it considers that the legal requirements regarding preparation, distribution and use of vaccines of all kinds, must be extended and insisted upon.

REFERENCES

1. Berlin Letter, *J. A. M. A.*, 96, 4: 283, 1931.
2. Berlin Letter, *J. A. M. A.*, 96, 5: 372, 1931.